



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Office of the Commissioner

Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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SB 930: AN ACT CONCERNING FOOD WASTE DIVERSION AND ANAEROBIC DIGESTION FACILITIES

HB 6503: AN ACT CONCERNING THE SITING OF ANAEROBIC DIGESTION FACILITIES ON FARMS.

Senator Cohen, Representative Gresko, Senator Miner, Representative Harding, and honorable members of the Environment Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these bills. For the record, my name is Bryan Hurlburt, the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture.

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An Anaerobic Digester is a system where bacteria biologically digests and breaks down organic material in the absence of oxygen. Anaerobic Digestors typically break down animal manure, food scraps, and wastewater biosolids. They then produce biogas, which can be stored and used as an energy source which is often used to generate electricity on-site or fed directly into natural gas pipelines.

Farm-based anaerobic digestion of manure presents an opportunity to increase renewable energy production, improve the economics of Connecticut's agricultural sector, reduce nutrient loading and associated water quality impairments, and address climate change. Anaerobic digestion also aligns with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's charge to conserve, improve, and protect the natural resources and the environment of the State of Connecticut, as well as to advance the efforts to generate cleaner, reliable and more affordable energy for Connecticut.

We support the diversion of the food and farm waste stream to recycling and energy production, and any attempts to make these digesters a reality for farmers and look forward to working with our partner agencies on these efforts.